

16
*Serious Advice to delivered Ones from
Sickness, or any other Dangers threat-
ning Death, how they ought to carry it, that
their Mercies may be continued, and
After Misery prevented.*

OR THE HEALED ONES
PROPHYLACTICON
Or Healthfull Diet.

Delivered in several

SERMONS

On JOHN 5. 14.

By *JAMES ALLIN,*
Teacher to the most ancient Church of Christ in Boston.



B O S T O N,

Printed by *John Foster,* and sold by *Edmund Ranger.*

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To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

THese Sermons written out by some pious Hearers from their own Notes, and by their desire hastned to the Press, so that I could not, for want of time, supervise them as I would; and not being willing to burden them with writing them again, I have been prevailed with, to consent to their publishing in this homely Dress; unfit indeed for the vein of this curious and carping Age, that are more for what pleaseth then what profiteth them: But seeing it hath pleased the Lord so far to bless them to any, as thereby to stir them up at their own cost and pains, I endeavour to promote others good thereby, if the Blessing may attend the Reading, that did the Preaching of them. And that it may, let me advise thee, into whose hand this may come, & thou think not thy time lost in reading it, that with the same integrity thou come to read them, that those who are the occasion of the publishing, did to the hearing, and with more mind to mend thy own, then find another faults. If thou findest any benefit, let it further thy Prayers for the Instrument, thy Thanks to the Lord for those have occasioned it; and let you and I adore the wisdom of God in managing unlikely and foolish means for thy saving good, to stain mans pride, and exalt his own glory, which is the aime and design of him who is,

Thy, May 16.
1679.

thy Souls friend

James Allin.

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The first of these is the fact that the
 world is not a uniform whole, but a
 collection of many different parts, each
 with its own peculiar characteristics.
 These parts are not only different in
 their physical properties, but also in
 their moral and intellectual qualities.
 The second fact is that the world is
 not a static entity, but a dynamic
 one, constantly changing and evolving.
 The third fact is that the world is
 not a simple system, but a complex
 one, with many interlocking parts and
 forces.

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John 5. 14.

Afterward Jesus finding him in the Temple, and said to Him, Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

IN the Chapter you have first the History of a glorious Miracle Christ wrought in healing an impotent man, from the first, to the tenth verse. 2. The Jews quarrelling at it, designing the ruine of him that healed him, from the tenth, to the nineteenth verse. 3. Christs Apology for himself in defence of the work he had done, to the end of the Chapter. In the first verse, and so on, you have the Miracle, and therein, first the time of it, it was at the Feast of the Passover. 2. The place, and that was *at Bethesda*, where was a Pool for healing any disease, to the person that first stepped in, after an Angel had troubled the waters. 2. You have the person healed, described. 1. By his Impotency, left of all in the time, none helped him into the water. 2. By the long time he had been under this distemper, which was 38 years. 3. You have the manner of his cure, it was by Christs word of command, in obedience to his command, he was to take up his bed and walk, as a sign that he was healed. Then in the second part of the Chapter you have the Jews quarrelling; and before they knew the Author of this healing, they charge the man with breach of the Sabbath, by carrying his bed, and his Apology being, that he was so commanded by him that healed him, and upon their Enquiry who was, he replied he did not know; Then you have Christ manifesting himself to the healed man; by whom the Jews understanding the person, they design his death. But you see Christ finding this person gives him heavenly Counsel how to carry it, that the *benefits* received may be for good to him, *goe and sin no more, &c.* In the words are two things, 1. Christ finding this impotent man he had healed, 2. The excellent counsel Christ gives him, 1. By way of direction, *Behold thou art healed*, 2. By way of caution, *sin no more, lest, &c.* In Christs finding this man, two things observable, 1. The time of it, it was *afterward*, after his obedience to Christ carrying his bed, which the Jews charged him with; and Christ manifesting himself to him in a glorious manner; and from thence we may draw this Observation.

Doct. That they who meet with most difficulty in the way of their obedience to Christ, may expect to meet with a reward in having more of Christs presence. So that whether the Duty in the way of our general course, or any particular duty we are doing for Christ, no difficulty should discourage us therein; the Lord Jesus knows how to make a Recompence and compensation to us. As you should consider, 1. The time when, so 2. The place where Christ found him, it was in the Temple, where he was offering his Thank-offering, and he was early at the Temple, for you find Christ did not stay for his coming, but found him there, so that he was early in returning Thanks; thence observe,

Doct. *That it is a good fruit of healing mercy from God that fully to acknowledge the same in our diligent attendance upon his instituted worship;* We have here, 1. Christ's own Example he leaves us, to be early in seeking God in the Temple, thither Christ comes, and 2. this healed mans Example also, there Christ finds him; he finds him not in a Tavern, or in his own house neglecting the means and publick worship, but in Gods house; And he is not there as one loth to come, or weary of that Service, but was early there, when Christ comes he finds him there; and from hence further we may observe,

Doct. *That it is a great advantage to any that are able, to attend upon the instituted worship,* yea, to be diligent in attending thereon; for there it is you will meet with the presence of Jesus Christ, there you will find that knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him, that you meet not with elsewhere, there Christ found him waiting upon God, to acknowledge his healing mercy, and there he meets with Christ. And further you may observe,

Doct. *They that do what they can in the acknowledgement of God, it is their duty, so far as they know they shall therein be acquainted with more of their duty.* God will give greater and clearer discoveries of his mind to him in that way; and you must remember God is not a debtor to us by any thing we pay him, but we are more indebted to him for those communications of his to us, *Psal. 50. 23. They that glorifie me to them I will shew the Salvation of God.*

But the latter part of the verse is that I would chiefly speak unto, the counsel Christ gives this healed man. Christ is a gracious Physician, and comes now to heal his Soul as well as his body, that he may be kept in such a measure of health as may be for his comfort, and in order to it he gives him this counsel.

1. By way of direction, *Behold thou art made whole;* That which Christ herein calls him unto, it is a diligent observance of the mercy God had bestowed, he wouly have him take more notice in a fuller view of this mercy, *thou art made whole,* Adding, *Behold,* healing mercy is that which should not pass your more-fervent consideration, where God gives it.

2. The caution Christ gives him, *Sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee,* he gives him a special Caution against sin, specially that sin God had been punishing him for; And he backs this caution with an enforcing Argument: *lest a worse thing* then *thirty eight years sickness* by such a distemper *come to thee.* And when Christ saith, *Behold thou art made whole,* he doth not say, I have healed thee, thereby teaching us humility (for he did not understand Christ to be God) but would mind him of the chief Author, consider thou art healed; So from the words we may take these three observations.

Doct. 1. *It is the duty of those that have received healing and delivering mercy from the Lord to take special notice of it.*

Doct. 2. *Those that are healed or delivered are to take very good heed that they sin no more.*

Doct. 3. *That sins after great and eminent Salvations, Deliverances, & mercies, they pull down greater Judgements.*

Doct. 1. Those that are under saving and healing mercy from God they should take special notice of it, Beold thou art healed. You must not take a transient view but take serious notice of Gods mercies; It is one of the most pretious and pleasant works of a Christian to take notice of, and observe Gods Providences to himself, *Psal. 111. The works of the Lord are great sought out of all those that have pleasure.*

therein. For the Explication of the Doctrine, we may Consider ,

1. What is this beholding and taking notice of delivering and healing mercy.

2. How we should take this notice of them, and 3. Why we should do so.

1. What is that notice Christ would have every one delivered and saved to the mercy vouchsafed. I Answer, this beholding is variously taken,

1. For a beholding with our bodily Eyes, as God said to Moses, Deut. 3. 27. *Lift up into the Top of Pisgab, and lift up thine Eyes West-ward and East-ward, and South-ward, and behold with thine Eyes the Land, &c.* he was to see the Land of Canaan with his outward bodily Eye.

2. There is a beholding with the understanding, a considering of it, a looking upon it with the Eye of the Soul, Rom. 11. 32. *Behold therefore the goodness and Severity of God; if you would see the goodness and Severity of God in his Providence, you must behold it with your understanding Eye, you must consider it, and your consideration fixed to behold it, which imports two things,*

1. Taking a full view of it in the latitude of the mercy, a looking it all over, it through and diligent observation, taking notice of every Argument in it that advances the mercy for your better acknowledgement of it: Not to take it by the lump, but observing every Circumstance that may heighten it to your consideration, to behold it so that you may see matter of wonderment, to behold every mercy with admiration.

2. It bespeaks the intention of the act, *Behold*, you must look intently upon it, you must keep your eye fixed upon it, it must not go out of your view, you must look wholly all round about it, and into every part of it with intenseness of Spirit.

2. But how should we thus take notice and look upon the mercy that we may rightly behold it, and consider it; I Answer,

1. In every Deliverance and work of Providence look into all the particular instances of Providence you find in it; We should take the mercy in pieces, and look into every part, and see what special Circumstances there are for our notice and observation. I shall mention some of those things in delivering mercies that are worthy your observation.

1. Take notice of the time and seasonableness of the mercy; at what a needful time God sent such a mercy; God then delivered you, and if it had not been then, what had become of you? Mercy coming in that needful Season puts a beauty upon it, as Eccles. 9. *Every thing is beautiful in its Season*, it is then a mercy suitable. This poor man who had lain *thirty eight* years at the Pool, and none helped him, it is probable, his Faith and Patience was worn out, and now in this nick of time Christ comes, according to that in *Isai. 41. 18, 19. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.* That is a Season of mercy when the heart is ready to fail, and mercy comes in; Abraham takes notice of his mercy and the deliverance of his Son in the nick of time, *Gen. 22. 12.* At that time when he was raising the knife to slay his Son, and calls the Name *Jehovah Feirith*, there, and then, *the Mount the Lord was seen.*

2. Observe and consider the care of Gods Providence in bestowing the mercy, the special and distinguishing care in preserving you, when others dye, you are brought out for deliverance, when others are not spared: Christ speaks *Emphatically.*

ally here to the man, thou art he God hath healed, when so many lay sick, there at the Pool besides: to have a healing mercy in a killing time it heightens the Mercy in a special manner, In *Isai. 26. 20.* God puts a special Remark upon this deliverance, they must enter into their Chambers; God hath a Chamber of safety and preservation for such, in singular and distinguishing favour to them.

3. Observe and consider how leading this mercy is unto other mercyes. Visually Deliverances and healing mercyes do not come alone, but are attended with many other mercyes; Now you must observe all the Concomitants of mercy that do attend it, as you find *H Ezekiab* doth, *Isai. 38. 17.* *Behold for peace I had great bitterness. But thou in love to my Soul hast delivered me from the Pit of Corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.* He takes notice of his healing mercy, deliverance from the pit of outward destruction, by that killing disease, and specially, of the mercy attending of it, that God did it in love to his Soul, and that it was a Testimony of Gods favour in pardoning all his sin also, one mercy goes not alone, to the People of God.

4. Another thing observable in a healing mercy is, the Instrument God makes use of, or the way he doth it in, sometimes it is in an unknown way, a way we did not expect such a mercy in, the poor man waited for healing at the Pool, but little thought Christ should heal him by his Word. It is sometimes a strange way that God sends in a mercy to his People, so *Luk. 5. 33.* a stranger passed that way and he took up the poor wounded man, and healed him, so it is sometimes a strange way God heals in, the impotent man had none to put him into the Pool, now to be healed in a strange way unexpected, this doth greatly enhance the mercy of God.

5. Observe and take notice of the designe and end of mercy and deliverance, what Errand it comes upon; what work, and what gracious effect it hath, all believers are under that general Promise, *Rom. 8. that all things shall work together for good to them,* &c. afflictions shall, and mercyes shall, every thing shall, now to see them thus working for our good, this heightens the mercy. The poor man goes into the Temple, and there acknowledgeth it; it is to further duty when it is done in mercy, caring not only to be healed, but to be Thankful,

6. Observe the respect mercy hath to the Prayers and desires of your Souls, and to the things you beg: there is a wonderful value upon mercyes, when they are in Answer to our Prayers, when you in distress have cryed to God, and called others it may be to cry to God for you, and the Lord hath heard, as *Psal. 34. This poor man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and delivered,* &c. he had Answer of Prayer, so that you should have such Interest in Heaven, and that God hears the cries of his poor ones, this exceedingly endears the mercy to us, as *Psal. 40. 1. 2. I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined to me, and heard my cry, he brought me up also out of the horrible pit, out of the misery clay, and set my feet upon a Rock, and established my goings.* That is the first thing to be observed in our healing and delivering mercyes, the Circumstances in it that heighten the mercy, being looked upon with a considerate fixed Eye, and an intelligent heart, to further our acknowledgement.

2. Observe and behold every mercy and deliverance how it doth fulfil the word of God to you; there is never a Providence of God but it is a fulfilling of Gods word, as it is said, *Psal. 143. 8. Stormy winds fulfilling his Word,* so doth every mercy and deliverance to his People. Now you should look on the work of Providence together with the Word of God, and see what particular word of God is made

be good to you by his Providence, for that is encouragement from experience
 trust in the word of God another time : God saith, *call upon me in the day of
 trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me*, Psal. 50. 15. Now such a Deli-
 verance is an Answer to such a Word and Promise sued out by Prayer, for therein
 God hath fulfilled a Promise to you. So 1 Cor. 10. 13, the Lord tells you that
 in every Temptation he will work a way for your escape, and that you shall be
 able to bear it, and in such a deliverance God hath fulfilled that Word to you, this
 his Beauty unto, and honours Gods word, in seeing God fulfilling it in the Exe-
 cution of Providences, so in *Job. 19. 36. not a bone of Christ was broken, this was
 that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

2. In all Deliverances and healing mercyes, that you should observe and consi-
 der in them who is the author of them, we are not only to look to the work done,
 but this person is healed, but whence it is. The Effect is a manifestation of the
 cause, we must labour to understand the cause, our understanding must look
 through things done to the cause, every one should see the hand of God which
 saith him, for there is the Name of God written upon the mercy and especially
 upon a gracious and eminent delivering Providence. And consider what you are
 the work of God therein.

1. You are to see the care God hath of you as your heavenly Father, so we are
 said in Scripture, God as your Father cares for you, he knows what you need,
Mich. 6. 26, 27. if for inanimate Creatures, much more for rational, especially,
 those among them that are also spiritual, and in every delivering mercy manifests
 that care of you; We are commanded that we should be found in our duty whe-
 ther we are under afflicting Providences, or any other : Trusting in, and leaving
 the Issue with the care of our heavenly Father, who careth for us, 1 *Pet. 5. 7.*
 therefore we are bid to *cast our care upon him*, and so every godly man rowls that
 care as to the Issue and Event upon the Lord, and then in the Deliverance the
 Lord manifests his care, so that in considering the mercy, you may read and see,
 that God doth take a fatherly care of you under whatsoever dispensation of Pro-
 vidence you are.

2. You may see the wisdom of God in healing and restoring you, especially,
 being eminent Deliverances; when it may be you were past hope, and had no
 means left for encouragement, the wisdom of God found out a way, provided
 means, and gave the blessing to a good Issue, 2 *Pet. 2. 9. The Lord knows how to de-
 liver the godly out of Temptation, &c.* he hath many wayes he doth not make known
 till the time of Deliverance, so that here also you may read this in the Delive-
 rance, the wisdom of God.

3. Observe in what way God doth convey his mercy, that is a great and beau-
 tiful thing, to behold the way in which God conveys every mercy to you; The
 way is Christ Jesus. No mercy comes to you but through the blood of Jesus
 Christ, Remember thou art he whose sins brought distress upon Christs Soul, how
 comes any Remedy for, or deliverance from the wounds, sicknesses, evils and dan-
 gers sin hath brought thee into, but only by Jesus Christ. That Pool of *Bethes-
 da* was a Type of Jesus Christ: who can make any thing healing, and Sovereign
 for recovery; A curse came by the fall upon every means used, only Jesus Christ
 hath restored the blessing upon the means; and that should heighten our thoughts
 of the mercy that it comes from and by Christ, no mercy comes otherwise, there-
 fore never look on any mercy, but in the view of it, remember and think of Jesus
 Christ,

Christ; 1 Cor. 3. 22 23. *all is yours*, saith the Apostle, *life, death, every thing*; but how? only as *you are Christs*? We came to have a right to every mercy by Jesus Christ, and only by him, and that should be a most beautiful Contemplation to us here upon Earth, which will be so glorious to our Eye in Heaven, where this discovery will be made fully, how all our mercyes flow to us by and through Christ.

4. You may read the grace of God in every such mercy. It is great love and kindness of God manifested in every mercy, for every sinner is unworthy of the least mercy, as Jacob acknowledgeth, *I am less then the least of all thy mercyes*, so it must be grace that brings mercy to you, and if you are made whole, know that healing mercy is of grace, yea, there are riches of mercy in every outward favour the Lord bestows; and this you should behold; *Behold*, the free and undeserved favour of God in all.

5. See the wonderful condescendency of God: every mercy shews wonderful Condescendency in God to a poor Creature, considering, though the Lord be high, yet he hath respect to things below, *Psal. 138.* and those that are so very low as we have made our selves by our sins, Oh what a stoop is it in the divine Majesty to take such care of vile sinners, that God should have any respect to your prayers, if God hath heard you in such a day, it heightens the Condescendency of God.

6. Lastly, observe and consider the end that God aims at in your Deliverance. God is a rational Agent aiming at a special mark in the Deliverances he gives. Now what is the aim and designe of God, what is Gods language to you by the mercy, is not the designe of it to further your Repentance, and your returning into Gods favour? that is the general end; these mercyes are the great Arguments. God would prevail with sinners to return to him by true Repentance; That is their encouragement in *Hos. 6. 1.* *he hath wounded, and he will heal*, but you may be much more encouraged, if you can say, God that hath wounded us, hath healed us, therefore in *Rom. 2. 4, 5.* he tells us this is the language of every mercy, and of all Gods goodness, to bespeak our hearts for Repentance, *the goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance*: as one mercy is leading to many other mercyes from God to you, so the designe of them all is to lead you to God, to serve him with cheerfulness, *Deut. 28. 48.* Consider therefore what God calls for; that you may comply with God, and that is what Christ here minds the poor man of, *Behold thou art healed*, thou hast attained that thou hast long waited for, and God hath given it, now it is not enough to bring a thank offering to bleis God before the Congregation, but that you sin no more, it is walking thankfully and obediently before the Lord all your dayes, and so you shall serve the end and designe of God herein.

2. As you should contemplate thus the mercyes God gives, so you should take a full and through view of them, with a fixed mind upon them, and that is in two things.

1. So look on every mercy that your heart may be affected; a serious fixed Eye will affect the heart, as we should look on transgressors breaking Gods Laws, so as to be grieved at them, *Psal. 119. 158.* *I beheld the Transgressors and was grieved, because they kept not thy Word*; so you should behold the mercyes of God and be affected, so as to rejoyce, and have your heart engaged to God; as the Psalmist, *Psal. 116. 1.* *I will love the Lord because he hath heard my voice*, &c. There should be a drawing out of our affections to God from the beholding the mercyes of God to

as you should love, so admire God, so behold as to wonder at such a mercy as the Psal. 31. 19. *how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the Sons of men?*

We should be so fixed in our contemplation of the works of Gods mercyes that we should never forget them, observe them so as to be alwayes minding them, Psal. 111. he will cause his works to be remembred, &c. It must not be our view as (Jam. 1. 21.) a Man looking his natural face in a glass, and going away forgets what manner of person he was, you must not look so on your mercyes, but keep up the Remembrance of them, that they iray never be forgotten. We are prone to forget, though highly taken and wonderfully affected with them in the present; be it the escaping of death, when the deliverance is over, as with David, Psal. 106. 13. *they sang his praise, but soon forgot his works*; David therefore saith, Psal. 103. 3, 4. *to praise the Lord with all his Soul*, and chargeth his Soul not to forget the mercyes of God; therefore you should charge your memories to be a Treasury of the mercyes of God, there may be erected a monument of them in your hearts. That is the second thing how you should take notice of such delivering mercy, we should take a thorough view of them, observing how the Lord manages all our afflictions, by mercifull providences leading us on to eternal: For as the Psalmist saith, Psal. 107. 43. By observing these things, we may understand much of the loving kindness of the Lord.

SERM. II.

It is the latter part of the verse we are speaking unto, the counsel Christ gives to the impotent man whom he had miraculously healed, how he might preserve that mercy and improve it. There are two Directions given him, That he should take special notice of his Deliverance, *Behold thou art made whole*. 2. A Caution against sin, *goe and sin no more lest a worse thing befall thee*.

From the first, we observed, *That it is the duty of those that are under saving mercy, to take special notice of it*. I shewed you what was the notice we should take of such a delivering and saving providence, we should look upon it throughly, upon all the circumstances that doe endear that mercy to us, that tender care of God, that respect it hath to our Prayers: we should look it all over: We should doe it with intention, so as to be affected with it, that it may abide with us, that we may remember it, that it may be a mercy never forgotten.

I shall give you only a few Reasons, briefly, because I would pass to the other, which I mainly intended in the choice of these words.

Reas. 1. *You ought to consider your mercyes because God commandeth it*. It is 2 that God commandeth, and that God expecteth, and therefore hath frequently put that affix upon a special mercy, *Behold it*. So Christ saith to this man *Behold this mercy*, look upon it with wonder, that a Sinner, a provoking sinner should be saved and delivered: wonder that God hath wrought so great deliverance before men: That was a matter of the Psalmists wonder, Psal. 31. 19. And in Mat. 6. 28. Christ saith there to his Disciples, *Why take ye thoughts for raiment?* *Consider the lillies of the field how they grow*: Look on the care of Gods providence for other creatures. If we must observe Gods care of inanimate creatures, or those only animate, much more should we look on his care of our selves, & the special mercyes he bestowes on us: God would not have you so to look abroad,

that you should not look at home, but the more to admire Gods mercy and care toward your selves.

2. *Reas. The non-observance of Gods mercy God doth severely reprove.* We find it finally reprov'd by God, when his People do not consider their deliverance. Psal. 106. 13. *They soon forgot his mercy.* It is put as a special aggravation of their sin, in their murmuring against God, *They soon forgot his mercy.* Why did they so soon forget it? Because they did not consider Gods mercy, did not charge their Souls with the remembrance of it, that they should forget none of Gods benefits.

3. *Reas. We cannot have the benefit of mercy, unless we take a serious view of it.* There are two special designs of God in every delivering mercy, one is to further our obedience: the other is to strengthen our Faith against another time. It is to further our obedience, to make us serve God the more cheerfully. Every mercy should be always in our eye, to spur us to our duty. Deut. 28. 47. *They did not serve me with cheerfulness*: it is a great sin, under great mercies, not to serve God with a great deal more cheerfulness; that we cannot do, without we observe his mercies. Then it is to strengthen our Faith in the expectation of mercy, another time, 2 Cor. 1. 10. *God hath delivered us, and he will.* God then heard your cry and delivered you. Abraham makes it a standing Proverb, and encourages to Faith, Gen. 22. 12. He puts a remark on that mercy, a name on the place, there God beheld me, and took that care of me, and prevented that ruine to my Son, in the Mount God will be seen.

4. *Reas. It is a great contempt of God not to observe his mercy.* God in every deliverance doth come near to us, and it is a marvellous inobservance not to take notice of him when he is near, Psal. 106. 4. *Remember me O Lord with the favour thou hast to thy People, visit me with thy Salvation.* When God comes with Salvation, he comes to give a visit to us; now we should take notice of it. We cannot see God, but only in the effects, God is made visible to us in his works; we should observe and see God there, what of the name of God is written upon it, what of the mercy, grace, goodness of God, else you carry it with disrespect to God.

5. *Reas. We cannot carry it suitably to God in our duty to him, without observation of his works and mercies towards us.* The various providences of God, call for variety of duty in us, we cannot be in the exercise of our proper duty, unless we observe that mercy. What is the duty under delivering mercy? It is to praise God, and that not for a day, but always, to live Gods praises: and therefore we should live in the view of those mercies, that are the matter and occasion of our praise, Psal. 107. 19. 20. *They cry to the Lord in their trouble, he saveth them out of their distresses: He sends his word and healeth them.* What was the duty God required? *O that men would praise the Lord for his wonderfull works!* You cannot give God praise for deliverance, unless you observe the full of that mercy, and your hearts be suitably affected by the Consideration of it:

But by way of Improvement.

USE. I. A word of Reproof to those that are inobservant of Gods Mercies. Men that only take a sensitive notice of mercies, will be thankful, & praise God as long as they feel the benefit, but how soon is it forgotten: Psal. 106. 13. they carry no more a remembrance, then a beast & sensitive creature: this is not the remembrance of a rational Creature which God expects from every one. The reason why you so soon forget it, mercies are so soon lost, and your affection and love to them, and to

God for them, is because you doe not consider the mercy and kindness God sheweth

USE. II It should put us upon this duty, that we would take special notice of every mercy: Look through it, see what special Arguments of Thankfulness to God there are in every mercy: there is not any deliverance that comes alone, nor any mercy that comes alone; we should by consideration look into every thing of the mercy, yea and what doth attend it, that which may further that notice that you may take of those mercies. There should be never a special deliverance and mercy God vouchsafeth you, but you should keep a Record of that mercy, that it might be alwayes to be overlooked by you, and all the circumstances of it. You find in the old Testament frequently, it was the practice of Gods people, to erect Monuments of praise for signal Mercies. *James Gen. 28. 12.* erecteth a pillar on the place where God appeared to him. And Abraham called the name of the place *El-ber-sher*, there God beheld me, *Gen. 22.* So *Gen. 16. Hagar*, when God in special distress delivered her, and shewed her a Well, where she might be relieved, she called the name of the well, *The Lord hath seen me*, though I did not look after him: So we should take notice of the mercy God vouchsafeth; a Christian should keep his Diary, and special Remembrance of his goodness.

It is also to be observed, that I mainly intend, and that is the caution Christ gives to this wicked man, *goe & sin no more*, Christ here dealeth with him as a gracious Saviour, he shews he had not only care of his outward Deliverance; but of his Soules deliverance, and that that mercy might not be lost by his sin, that God had in his mercy bestowed on him, and therefore Christ prescribeth him a dyet, how he should behave himself, that he might preserve that health, and continue that mercy; you must take heed of your old dyet, that there be no pleasant morsel of sin that you should delight in, but as the Psalmist prayes, *Psal. 141. 4. incline not my ear to any evil thing, to praise wicked works with them that work iniquity, and let me not be of their dainties*; this the Lord Jesus gives him charge about, *do not eat of the dainties*, it will prove a surfeit, there will be a relapse, that will be a more dangerous disease if you do not take heed of sin.

Doct. 2. That those that are under saving mercy ought to be very careful that they sin no more. For the clearing this Truth, I shall 1. Shew you what this duty is to sin no more, what it is that God doth expect of those he hath prevented misery from, or delivered out of it, that have been under it, for it is the same, that God doth expect if you have not been sick, but have been preserved from it, your preparation engageth you to this duty; If you have been preserved, and God hath delivered you from it, this is your duty, that you sin no more. 2. The Reasons why it is the duty and should be the special care of them under saving mercy.

1. What this duty is?

Answer. 1. Negatively, It is not meant a Legal obedience, Christ doth not require any to impossibilities, to perform duty without the least stain of sin, that is impossible to fallen man, yea, to man restored, since his fall in this world, it is not a doctrine of Legal perfection Christ here commendeth, it is a great Truth, *Eccles. 7. 20.* There is no man that liveth and sinneth not; *1 King. 8. 46.* saith Solomon, *If they will come and confess it, for there is no man that liveth and doth not sin*, *Joh. 1. 8.* that saith he hath no sin be denieth the Truth, the Truth is not in him, that is his greatest sin, a very great sin, and discovers him to be in a state of sin, to say he is free and doth not sin.

2. But it is an Evangelical obedience, and Perfection Christ calls for, & especially you may take up the meaning of it under these three considerations & heads.

1. *Goe and sin no more*, that is, labour to be in such an Estate, that thou mayst be in a Gospel Sense in a sinless Estate, you are now healed, you have bodily healing; let that be your care now that your Soul may be healed. It is said of the Children of God, those that are truly converted, 1 Joh. 3.9. *He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his Seed remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God*, that is that Christ now directs you to, to labour to be in such a State, in which thou canst not sin, that you may not be under the dominion and reign of sin, under the domineering Ruling power of sin, nor under the damning power of sin! your great business is to labour to have a real, saving Interest in Jesus Christ; thereby Christ doth manifest his great care of this poor man, that he would have his Soul healed, he would have him in a saving State, for Eternity. Now let it be your main care to improve your health and strength renewed and spared to you, to get a right to eternal life, that you may be a child of God, and though being such will not secure you from outward chastisement and affliction in the World, yet it will secure them from you as being the punishment of sin, and the effect of Gods wrath. You are thereby perfectly healed in this respect, that there shall never be an affliction in Gods anger, but only the fruit of his love; you find the same Counsel given by Jesus Christ, Joh. 8. 10, 11. when Jesus saw the woman brought before him, and accused of Adultery, that he should condemn her, and all her accusers were gone; he said unto her, doth no man accuse thee, she said, no man Lord, Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn thee, *goe and sin no more*, as if the Lord Jesus should say, I came not now into the world to be a Judge, & to condemn sinners; indeed there is a time when Christ will be the Judge, but now I Judge no man, therefore let that be your care that you *sin no more*, you get a pardon of your sin, and interest in a Saviour, that your heart be sanctified for your future walking with God. In this command of Jesus Christ he doth not only express, what is his will, what is approving to God, and his own will, but Jesus Christ was actually the Saviour of this man by this command, he did hereby heal his Soul by this command as well as his body, by bidding him take up his bed and walk, and he doth thereby show his readiness, when that is our care that we may not sin again, that we may truly be the Children of God: you shall find God manifesteth this in his mercy, that he is much more willing to save your Souls, then he hath been to deliver your bodies; this is the great thing God would have you goe to him for, that your Souls may be healed as well as your bodies, that is the first thing, that you labour to be in such a State, that no affliction may ever come upon you in way of Judgement, or in Gods wrath.

2. *Goe and sin no more*, it doth import thus much, that it should be the diligent care and endeavour of them that are under saving mercy, that they do not allow themselves in any known sin, take heed of sin as of a poison, that will do you a great deal more mischief now then ever before; that you do not allow any sin either in thoughts or actions, nor live in any known sin, 1 Joh. 2. 1. saith the Apostle there, *My little Children these things write I unto you that you sin not, but if any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*, all the writings of the Gospel (that is the meaning of it) it is not to encourage you to sin, but to caution you against sin. What sinning? that is, see you do not allow it, but if sin be too hard for you, and in a conflict carry you captive, then make your confession to Christ

labour to get pardon and power against it, Rom. 7. 18, 24, 25. as Paul did, he acknowledged there he did sin, but it was against his will, *the sin that I would not do it*, and how doth it appear to be against his will, by the sad moans he made Jesus Christ, by his earnest cry for deliverance, and by his acknowledgement of that great mercy of God, that had found out such a deliverer for him, so must go and do likewise. Do not allow your self in any sin, but shew you follow it, confess it: there is your encouragement, you have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, there is great liberty for you to goe for every Covenant mercy; pardon and power against sin are great Covenant mercies. *Goe and sin no more*, that is, be sure you take heed you do not commit that again, for which God hath especially afflicted you, or hath threatened you for, when God hath in especial manner been dealing with you for, chastising you for, and sin no more, commit that sin no more, so he saith to that woman, Joh. 8. *sin no more*; take heed of Adultery as long as you live, you must remember ordinarily the chastisements and afflictions God brings on his people, are for sins, and there are some special sins of the people of God that are the provocation of special chastisements, when God doth not cast you into hell for them, but deliver you and save you, then that is your great duty, that you should live with a fear of that sin all your dayes, and take heed of that, Psal. 89. 33. *If they break my Statutes I will chastise them with the Rods of men*. We ought to look every Chastisement as coming to us for sin, and to find out those special sins, and there should be the great care of a Christian, that he should forsake them, not to deal with them any more, that that hath pulled down so great a Judgement, take heed you sin that sin no more.

Ques. But you will say, how shall we know, what is that sin that God doth specially chastise us for, that we may be warned and take heed ever of committing sin any more?

Ans. Observe and take special notice what evil God doth threaten with punishment and Chastisement on his people; for what sins God doth especially threaten punish his people for all afflictions, are the accomplishment of Gods word, are the fulfilling of Gods Threatnings, therefore in the Threatning you may see what the sin is that God punisheth, that that he saith, Psal. 89. *when they break Laws, I will chastise them with Rods*. Especially God doth threaten to punish with his immediate hand, afflictions that come from God more immediately, are punish those sins that men cannot see, that doe not lye under the observation of men, that men cannot reach; sins committed in secret, Hebr. 13. 4. *whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, God himself will judge them, they may commit sin secretly, out of the view of men, but God himself undertaketh to judge that. So 1 Thes. 4. 6. *Let no man goe beyond and defraud his Brother in any manner, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such*, if there be any secret hidden way of unrighteousness, and Oppression, that men cannot find out, the Lord himself is the avenger of such.

1. Observe for what sins God hath inflicted punishment on his professing people of old, for they are written for our example, there we shall read the indignation of God against sin, and the ordinary way of his dispensations against sin, when they are sins of a professing people. 1 Cor. 10. 6. The Apostle gives a catalogue of those sins for which God did inflict variety of Judgements on his people Israel in the wilderness, as that he would doe in the same way, or in a greater;

greater, among Professors in gospel times: these things were our example, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted, neither be ye idolaters, as some of them were, neither commit fornication, as some of them committed, nor tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, nor murmur, as some of them murmured: These are the sins that provoke God to those variety of judgments. There was idolatry, superstition, worshipping God in a false way, & Fornication, that sin of uncleanness, and the tempting of Christ: How did they tempt him? By despising his own way of providing for them, having low common thoughts of that Manna from Heaven; preferring the satisfying their own lusts, before the counsel and will of God to lead them to eternal life. There was a murmuring spirit against God, and against those God set up, for these things God did punish, 1 Cor. 11. *For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many fallen asleep.* What cause? Their slowness at the Sacrament, want of preparation for it, and being in the spirit of it, for this cause many are sick and fallen asleep.

3. If you would know what sin God doth chastise and punish you for, take special notice of what sin God doth represent the guilt of before you in the time of your sickness; or in the time of the visitation of his people, God doth many times carry a discovery of the sin in the punishment, it carries a great deal of Conviction with it, may be many times you have heard many a Sermon that hath convinced you of that very sin, that you have taken no notice of: but God hath set it before you in the time of affliction, and distress, it may be that hath been the thing, for which you have prayed God to deliver you and spare you now, and you would mend that course. How many on their sick beds have confessed and bewailed their contempt of the word of God, of Jesus Christ, and of the gospel, and their Sabbath breaking, God hath laid the weight of it on them in the time of their sickness, and they have promised amendment: usually, that is the special provocation God hath, which he makes mens Consciences to smite them for, at such a time, that though it may be Conscience hath told thee many a time, and checkt thee, but now awakeneth thee in another manner, therefore it is said, you find God doth many times represent the guilt of sin (that hath long time before been committed) in the time of affliction, and thereby tells you it was laid up among his Treasures, hence, Psal. 25. 7. *Lord remember not the sins of my Youth.* It was in a time of affliction God brought to remembrance, and brought into his view the guilt of some youthful sins, Job. 13. 26. *Thou hast made me to possess all the sins of my youth;* that is, God had represented them to him in the horror, terror and guilt of them: so God suffers many times even sins that have been pardoned in his own, to be represented to them as if they had never been pardoned, in the time of affliction, that they might be the more humbled for them, and might esteem the manifestation of a pardon in respect of those sins: So 1 King. 17. 18. Saith that woman to Elisha, when God had slain her son, *Dost thou come to bring my sins to remembrance?* Afflictions bring sins to remembrance, those that it may be we have forgotten, they are as if they were newly committed, those sins that were a provocation to God: observe in the time of distress, what are those sins God doth load your Consciences with, that you would be glad to be unburthened of, that you make many vows and promises to God of amendment, that is your great duty, when God hath answered your cry, that you sin no more; take heed you do not lick up those vomits you have vomitted out in time of distress, and break

your

your promise and vow to God. By a diligent observance of these things you may see what is the quarrel God hath personally with you, and therefore to take heed that you do not provoke him anew.

2. The Reasons of it. There are two heads of reasons: I shall take up only those given in the Text, expressly or implied.

Reas. 1. Is drawn from God, why you should take such care that you do not sin again, do not abide in an unconverted estate, and do not allow your self in any evil. Do not abide in any sin God hath punished you for: there are two Arguments, 1. From the mercy and goodness of God to you; thou art healed and restored to means of salvation, therefore do not sin any more, do not live in such a state, mercy bespeaks thee. 2. From the Justice of God that standeth ready to avenge abused mercies: if you do, before you must look for great evils then any you have had, a worse thing then thirty eight years sickness, or any plague.

2. The Arguments drawn from our selves, should engage us not to sin any more. 1. Our own engagements and promises to God not to sin any more: Have you not made many vows and promises at such a time that you would not? Now God expecteth that you should pay your vows. 2. From the nature of this duty of thankfulness to God: You will all owne that you owe God Thankfulness for healing mercy, the truth of it appears in this, that you do not provoke God again, it is else but to mock God, if you be not resolved to sin no more. But,

1. From God, from the mercy of God, that is a great Argument why you sin no more, because God hath healed you; if you look upon this healing mercy, how can you kick against that bowels, love and kindness that hath healed you? The great design of mercy is to lead you to Repentance, Rom. 2. 4. *The goodness of God that leadeth thee to Repentance*, that is the errand that every mercy comes on to you, its the voice and language of every mercy and deliverance, that you should sin no more, should not abuse this mercy, by sinning against the God of your mercy. You are healed: Who healed you, whence was it you were healed? Was it not wonderfull mercy of God, that you should be on this side the bottomless pit? Were not many of you unprepared to dye, when you were looking into eternity? it was dreadfull to think into what eternity you were going: would you not have given the world for a day more, and for the striving of Gods Spirit? Now God hath healed you; the mercy and kindness of God are said to be Cords to draw us, Hos. 11. 3. *I drew them with the Cords of a man*: They are not drawing as you draw Beasts, but as men are drawn: How is that? It is by arguments fit to reason; There is so much goodness and truth appears in every mercy of God, that nothing can carry greater perswasion to draw you to God, and to prevent your sin. O the Rhetorick there is in mercy, if you could but understand the Language of it, wonderfull sweetness there is in every mercy to perswade you not to sin; and there is not only Rhetorick in it, but Logick, the strongest reason to take hold of the rational part of man, if thou hast any thing of a man, and of the rational being God hath made.

I should have shewed you here, and given you some hints of those Arguments, mighty Arguments, that lye in a delivering mercy, the language it speaks to them that are delivered, to caution them against sin, and against any provocation to God. There are three Arguments, a threefold Cord, that might draw and
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perswade

perswade men to this duty, that when they are delivered and saved by God; they should take heed they do not sin any more, they do not despise and contemn this mercy of God, for every abuse of it is the highest contempt of mercy, *despise thou the riches of his goodness?*

SERM. III.

WE are now upon the second Doctrine, viz. *That they that are under delivering and saving mercy ought to be very careful that they sin no more,* that is, 1. Not to abide in any state of sin, you that God hath spared longer in this world, you should not live without Christ and conversion one day more. 2. Not to sin any sin willingly or wilfully, to live in any known sin, or to approve of sin. 3. Especially be careful you return not to such evils that God hath been punishing of you for. And you may know them thus. Those that God hath awakened your Consciences to charge upon your Souls at such a time: and those God hath helped you to make many promises never to commit them, take heed of such sins especially. Methinks the Lord Jesus Christ doth in a most compassionate way plead with poor Souls, and with every sinner, that they should sin no more: And by these three Arguments, 1. From the kindness and mercy that they have received from the Lord, thou art healed, therefore sin no more. And there are these two main Arguments in it, 1. It is great ingratitude to God to sin again after healing mercy, would you carry it so to any man that was an Instrument of your healing. A Physician whose endeavours God hath blessed, would you therefore do him the greatest mischief? Thus you do when you sin against God, who is the Author of all your deliverances. What is sin, but an endeavour as much as the sinner can, to destroy the very Being of him that hath given and preserved your Beings. This is an ill requital, Deut. 32.5. *Do you thus requite the Lord, is this all the thanks that you will give to a healing God, to spit in the face of Christ, and do him all the despight you can?* methinks it is a heart-breaking expression, 2 Sam. 15. 17 *Is this thy kindness to thy Friend?* to such a friend as David was, that you will goe into the Camp of his Enemies. So by every sin you goe aside from God. Hath God saved thee from Hell, and delivered thee out of the pit, and is this all thy requital? That that goes nearest to God are sins against love, Psal. 55. 12. *Had it been an Enemy I could have born it, but it was thou my friend, and my familiar.* So saith God to every saved sinner, thou whom I spared from going down to the pit, and shewed such kindness to: Ingratitude is an evil that is abhorring among mankind, and the greatest of all evils. Our Lord Jesus tells us Math. 5. 45. *To do good unto them that do good unto us, sinners will do the same,* and one man to another. Indeed, it is to act like God, and to be a good Christian, to do good against evil, but it is to act the part of the Devil to do evil against goodness, they are the vilest of all sinners. Therefore that should be a great Argument with them that are healed, hath God healed you? Do not the greatest wrong and injury against God. 2. It is not only ingratitude to God, but it is a great injury to our selves; and if that be not a great Argument to prevail, If thou art so vile and sinful that the kindness of God will not prevent your sin, yet methinks your own mischief thereby might perswade you, as Psal. 85. 3. *I will hearken what God the Lord will say, for he will speak peace to his People, and to his Servants, but let them not return again so folly.* For it is the greatest folly in the world

man to sin after God hath spoken peace, and after he hath healed him, Deut. 32. 6. *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise.* It is the greatest injury you can do yourselves; if you consider, 1. The folly that is in it, by this kindness of God you may see where your true happiness lies, and where your greatest misery lies. The missing of it in a mans chiefest end, is the greatest folly, now this is a missing of it in your chief end to sin again. The mercy & kindness of God in healing of you doth manifest what kindness there is in this God, and what rest you may find in returning to him, Ps. 116. 7. *Return unto thy rest O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* You find no rest in the way of sin, no Soul rest but in God. And thou hast no reason to doubt but that there are Arms of mercy ready to receive thee, that hath reached out so much love unto thee when thou wert in the way of thy sin. 2. It shows thee the way to greater mercy, as the contrary is the way to thy greater misery. A confessing and forsaking of sin is the way to find mercy. The Lord doth bespeak in every healing mercy, that is not all, I would do for thee, but do not hinder, nor forsake your own mercies. You have now experienced that you have to do with a God of mercy: and he that hath shewed mercy to you through Christ, you may easily think how rich and bountiful you may find him if you would close with him. But if you turn aside to living vanities, you forsake your own mercies, Job. 2. 8. 3. It is a great folly because healing mercy gives space for Repentance, and neglecting this is a despising of the mercy; why are you restored but that you might have opportunity to make your peace with God? It is a space to repent, but sinning is an abusing this patience, in mispending the present time, that God hath given you to make sure of a good estate. What serious thoughts have you had, if you had time again how you would improve it. 4. Take heed how you spend the time now you have it, Rom. 2. 4. losing a season for Salvation, and it may be the last you may have you would think it folly in other matters, for a vain companion or trifle, to lose the opportunity of getting a great bargain, here you do so for worse then naught. Lastly, it is a great injury and folly to your selves to sin again after you have been healed, for it is an acting against a mans own experience. God hath made you to taste the bitterness of your sins, and yet he tells you in your deliverance, how unwilling and loth he was to punish you; sin brought all your evils, it was free mercy that delivered you. Have you surfeited with the dainties of sin, and will you desire them again? Thus David prays, *let me not eat of their dainties.* And the burnt child dreads the fire. Now mercy tells you, you have escaped, do not run into sin again; this will appear to be greater folly.

But that is the first Argument from the goodness of God towards you; will you hear then the language that your healing mercy speaks. Oh the Oratory it hath in the Ears and hearts of men, if we be men, O that it would bespeak our Souls now, and caution us against sin.

2. Another argument Jesus Christ useth, and that is an argument used by mercy: it doth not only put you in mind of the good you receive, but it gives you warning of future misery. If it were Justice that should come to treat with the sinner, it would not be by warning, but by smiting: but mercy tells you how the Justice of God stands engaged to avenge the abuse of it. You must not be pleased with your condition, and think the bitterness of death is over: No, a worse thing may befall you. Mercy is now willing to embrace you, but if that will not doe, Mercy will at length deliver you into the hands of Justice; and woe

to the Sinner that is so delivered by the hands of mercy ! Methinks it is such a language as God spake to Balaam, Numb. 22. 31. when an Angel with a flaming sword stood in the way of his Rebellion : He was striving to goe, though he found difficulty in his way : So the Lord Jesus tells you, there is a flaming sword in every sinners way after deliverance, you run upon your own perill and uttermost hazard ; the Judgements of God will be bitter, & you will feel the smart of them. And by these three Arguments, the Lord gives warning of Judgement to come upon the Sinner that continues in sin.

1. Consider that all the afflictions and troubles that you had, were a fruit of your own doing : He puts you in mind to remember your former wayes and evil doings. You were in the hands of Justice, and mercy hath delivered you ; but it is not a compleat and total deliverance, if you continue in sin : it is but a Reprieve, if you sin again. There is a present respite of Judgement, it is not a confuming and desolating Judgement : you are reprieved, but if you sin, remember you are in the hands of Justice still, and those afflictions you have suffered, are but the beginnings of those sorrows which God will bring upon you for your Sins.

2. Remember that God hath greater strokes, and can lay on heavier than any yet : Dont you think that God hath pent all his arrows, or hath done his worst, No, He can doe yet a great deal more : God can heat the furnace seven times hotter then ever yet : Lev. 26. 14. *But if ye will not hearken unto me, to doe all these commandments, &c. I will even punish you seven times more for your iniquities.* God hath other arrows that are more poisoned deadly arrows.

3. Continuance in sin will provoke God (after deliverance) to inflict greater strokes. As God can punish you more, so he will certainly punish an impenitent people, when Judgements and mercies will not change them, Ezra. 9. 14. *Should we break again thy Commandments, wilt thou not be angry with us till thou hast consumed us ?* That this holy man was afraid of after deliverance.

Reas. 3. Why you should take heed that you sin no more ; From the proneness that is in mans nature to return again to sin ; more prone after deliverance, especially, those that are in a state of unregeneracy ; when corrupt nature hath been only under a chain of restraint, with what eagerness do they return to sin again. Yea, we find a proneness in Gods own Children, as Hezekiah after great deliverance, his heart was lifted up, & he did not render unto the Lord according to the benefits received : How much more those that are in a state of sin, you will meet with the same Temptations, & the Devil will be more busie, and your own heart more careless, if you be not exceeding cautious.

Lastly, Consider the engagements that lye upon healed sinners, not to sin any more. And they are,

1. From God, what a mighty engagement is that, when God saith, *Ob do not this abominable thing my Soul hates.* That when you have had the love and kindness of God manifested to you, you should carry it so to God.

2. The engagement of your own vows. When God hath made sin bitter to you, O how ready were you to vow and engage to sin no more ! This, then, is a forfeiting of your Bond and Obligation.

USE 1. For Information: Hence learn, and you may see that our Thankfulness to God (the main of it) doth not lye in our expressions, but in our Spirits and Conversations. This was a man that Jesus Christ found forward in the Temple bringing his thank-offering to God, and he was early there : Christ finds him there diligently attending

the means, (very few are thus amongst us, many are willing to be left at the mercy of God, and the first that may go out) but now you will throw all that is done after your Thank-offering, if you go and sin again. It is not the burnt-offering and Sacrifices, but a loving and serving God with all the heart and Soul, that is acceptable to him. Therefore you must not think you have made amends to God for healing mercy, because you have given a verbal acknowledgement: no, this is the language of mercy, and if you would be true to God and sin no more, Psal. 50. ult. *Who so offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him I will direct his conversation aright, will I show the Salvation of God.* They go both together; so such a one God will show his Salvation. Indeed all our acknowledgements are but mockery. For to say *God we thank thee*, or to bring a publick acknowledgement of praise to God, and yet for the sinner to do all he can against God, is a horrid piece of mockery: you had better say nothing at all: As the said Sampson, Judg. 16. *Thou hast mocked me, and hast not told me all mine heart;* so God say to many a sinner. This must needs be a great sin when instead of acknowledging God, you come to provoke him; and to put the highest affront upon the divine Majesty, Psal. 78, 36. *They remembered that God was their Rock, and God their Redeemer, nevertheless they flattered him with their mouth, and lied to him with their Tongue: for their heart was not upright with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.* To think to flatter and speak God fair, it is the greatest injury a sinner can put upon the great God, he that is able to discern all your secret, and what your hearts say, it is to put a great affront upon the heavenly Father, and instead of giving him the praise, it is a cursing and blaspheming of him in his face.

III. It is of Reproof unto those that are so far from taking heed that they sin no more after great and eminent Deliverances, when God hath unbound them and set them at liberty, that they do sin a great deal more; that instead of being reformed, and carrying better to God, they carry it a great deal worse. This did stigmatize Ahaz, 2 Chron. 28, 22. *This is that Ahaz, after his affliction, and Gods deliverance he sin- neth more and more.*

IV. That the Lord charges upon Israel, Judg. 10, 11, 12. I delivered you from the hand of such a misery and affliction when you cryed, yet notwithstanding, you have forsaken me, therefore I will deliver you no more. In Jer. 1, 6, it is said, *And hearkened and heard, & no man spake aright, no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done?* like wild Creatures that have been chained up a while they are the more fierce; They turned more fiercely after their wickedness, and were more bold and daring in them: this is a great provocation.

V. It is of Exhortation to press this holy and suitable Counsel of Jesus Christ upon them that have been under Deliverance: Have you been delivered from the hand of a cruel enemy, or the Small Pox, that killing disease? Have your Families been delivered? What is your duty now? That should be the great enquiry of our Souls, what shall I doe for God? I cannot give you Counsel in better words than Christ gives here, *Go and sin no more*, that is, take heed that you doe not go on in those evils that God hath convinced any of in themselves or others at the time of their distress. As,

VI. In sins of Omission, God hath been punishing for these things: and how many in bitterness of soul have expressed how God hath charged these home upon their Consciences, when they have been near unto death? as neglect of a right

improvement of the precious seasons of grace : when any of you live under such saving means, under the offer and tender of Christ, and yet have not improved it : Consider that the neglect of Christ is the greatest sin, and it will be charged by Christ at the day of Judgement among the greatest of evils, even sins of Omission, *Mat. 26.* latter end. This you did not to me. This neglect of Christ will be charged heavy at that day upon you, that do not make it your great, main and daily business to be turned and truly changed, to be fitted to die; when God hath put you in fear of death and eternity, what evils have been your trouble and fear then but your unsuitness for that change ? Will it not be your great sin, that another sickness or danger should find you as unprepared as you were ? How bitterly have I heard this lamented by some that they have not given up themselves to be in Covenant with the people of God as well as to the Lord ; that they have been negligent of Church Communion with Gods people. How many dying ones have with bitterness of Soul bewailed this, that their own sad and discouraging thoughts of themselves, or rather their own pride hath hindered from that which is such a Covenant-engaging duty. How many in a time of distress have made these vows, that after such a sickness they would give themselves up to God. Do you look upon these as great things of Christ, and of his Interest ; Hath not God made the special promise of a blessing to a thousand generations ? That that doth perpetuate there enjoyment of God to future Ages, is this joyning our selves to the people of God. Therefore to live in the neglect of that is a great sin, and if God hath convinced you of it, take heed that you forfeit not your deliverance by such sins.

Again, negligence under the means of grace : This hath also been sorrowfully bewailed ; either in not coming to hear, that they have neglected any Season : and when hearing, they have cast Gods word behind them.

2. As sins of Omission, so also of Commission : when God hath convinced of these sins, take heed of them again ; Hath God told you of Sensuality, or of uncleanness, or unrighteousness, take heed that these sins do not live & revive in you after healing mercy : Let not God find you at these practices again. The Lord saith to us, you shall have your life upon condition you will sin no more, and you accept it, and look upon it as a great favour : Now the Lord when he comes to condemn you, will do it out of your own mouths, and this sin, especially, your sin after deliverance hastens thy Judgement, *1 King. 2. 42.* As Solomon said to Shimei, so here it may be said to such a sinner.

S E R M. IV.

THe Doctrine we are speaking to is, *That it is the duty of healed and saved ones to be very careful they sin no more.* We shewed what it is to sin no more, and why such as are under healing and saving mercies should sin no more. We are upon the improvement hereof by way of Exhortation, that I may set home this Counsel of Jesus Christ on all your hearts, and upon my own, that we take good heed that we sin no more. There are five or six Motives or considerations to further our acceptance and improvement of this Counsel. If it were no more then that it is the Counsel of Christ from his own blessed mouth, who is a true lover of mens Souls, that were enough to further any that have love to Jesus Christ, and to their own Souls, to be careful to attend to his Counsel, Christ never advised any to their own hurt.

Suppose

Suppose you had been hearing Christ himself, and that he had spoken in particular to you, do not you think his words would have been of weight to you? why, Christ's advice, and not to that man only, but to all in like case, therefore your furtherance, Consider,

1. That sinning again will disappoint you of the good of your deliverance, I will eat out the good and sweet of it. The outward mercy of healing, or however the Salvation of God is to you, it is not a mercy alone. Such is mans misery since the fall, that there is no outward mercy or dispensation of God to you, but if it comes alone, it comes under the curse, and it proves a greater misfortune a mercy; and where you enjoy any mercy from God, if it do not deliver you from sin, it is not in favour, but comes under the influence of the old Covenant, 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. As the Apostle saith of every Creature of God it is good, if it be received with Thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and Prayer, (12.) if it be received with a heart truly Thankful, it is sanctified; without which you have no good in any Creature enjoyment, because it is un sanctified: as however the sinner doth is defiled, because himself is defiled, so whatever he enjoys is defiled, he himself being un sanctified. Then mercy and outward deliverance carries a great deal of good in it, when it fits you for Gods service, then it leads to the end of its first Institution, to further the Service of God, but sinning again destroys this end of it. If a mercy makes you better, then it is a choice mercy; but if it do not better you in your Souls, it is far from being good to you, I will say of such mercies as of Jonahs goard, Jon. 4. 5, 6. When he was in great distress, and the Sun beat upon him, and greatly afflicted him, and the Lord made him goard to come up over Jonah, to be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief, and Jonah was exceeding glad of the goard. But Jonah was not justified hereby in his heart, by obedience to God, therefore there was a worm that smote the Goard that it withered.

You may be glad of your deliverances, but if sin remain, it will be as a worm in them to destroy the shadow & the comforts of them; therefore take heed that your sin no more, for that will spoyle you of the best good of your mercies, the power and sweetness of a mercy will be eaten out thereby, that is the first Motive. 2. Consider, that sinning after deliverance, will hinder you from the enjoyment of other mercies which God intends you together with your deliverance; for that is not all God intends in shewing poor sinners a common bounty, Christ means to tell this healed man here, this is not all my meaning in coming to heal thee, I have Soul healing to bestow upon thee, but sin stops and prevents this, as the Lord said to David, *If that had been too little I would have done so and so for thee,* 2 Sam. 12. 8. the outward mercy is the least, God is inclined to do more, but as Mat. 5. 24. *Your iniquities have turned away his Ear from you, and your sins have withheld good things from you.* Are you not made better by mercies, are you not changed & renewed by repentance under mercies, what is the matter? why, your sins have hindered, your iniquities have kept good things from you. As it is said, God makes a way for his anger, so sometimes he doth for his mercy; in removing a present Judgement: but Impenitency, unreformedness, that stands in the way God had made for his mercy; as it is said of Christ at Capernaum, *he could do no great works there because of their Unbelief.* So to speak with reverence, God cannot proceed in mercy when sin is renewed. Christ tells them, Luk. 16. 11. *If you have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*

Riches ? if you carry it not well to God in a common mercy, do you think the God will bestow and betrust you with more and better mercies ?

3. Consider, that sinning after deliverance it is a greater sin then your sins before you received the mercy, you cannot sin now at so easy a Rate as before ; you sin with a higher hand. Your mercy puts an aggravation upon your sin, *for to him that knoweth to do good and doth it not, to him it is sin*, 1st Jam. 4. ult. that is, he sinneth at a higher Rate then another, because he sinneth against light, yea, and against love, (Gods love) therefore his sin is of a deeper dye then the sins of others are.

4. Consider, they that sin after Deliverance, they are a greater provocation to God ; God is more angry with such, for such sins then others, 2nd Sam. 12. 8. the Lord by the Prophet reckons up great things to David he did for him. *I anointed thee King over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy Masters house, and thy Masters wives into thy bosom, and I gave thee the house of Israel and Judah, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things, wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord?* for it is said, Chap. 11. ver. ult. *The thing that David had done displeased the Lord, so that the sword should not depart from his house*, &c. Sins after Deliverances, and great Mercies are great provocation.

5. Consider, sins after deliverance they are sins against your special engagements and Covenants ; I doubt not but many of you in time of distress have made that prayer which David did, Psal. 119. 175. *Let my Soul live, and it shall praise thee* have not many of your prayers and cries in sickness been, that you might live to praise God to be better in Gods Service ; Now to live in sin to Gods dishonour after deliverance, how contrary is this to your Engagements, to reproach and blaspheme his holy Name afterward.

6. Consider, the great advantage of not sinning any more ; this is preserving Diet of an healed sinner, Christ as a wife and faithful Physician prescribes this as health preserving Diet. This is the way to preserve and continue the mercies you have received and do enjoy, as you will, if you continue a holy man, &c. take heed to sin no more, Isai. 48. 18. *O that thou hadst hearkened unto my Commandments, when had thy peace been as a River, and thy Righteousness as the waves of the Sea ; it would have born down all before it, all should have given way, no Enemy should have disturbed that peace given you by the favour of God upon his Reconciliation with you.*

But by way of Direction.

If you should say now, but what is that that we must do that we may not sin any more : Here are but a few words, but there is a great deal couched in them as the sense of them ; A little to spread before you what is contained therein, *Go and sin no more.* that is,

1. Let this be your special care to improve the time you have by this deliverance, and your saving mercies to the saving of your Souls : That is, labour now to get into a saved Estate, take heed you do not again nor any longer neglect the offers and tenders of Salvation made to you, and if you say this is to put a man upon impossibilities, such as man cannot do, and it is as much as to say, to a hungry man eat no more, & to a thirsty man drink no more, so is it to say sin no more, Job. 15. 16. my meaning therefore is, labour to be in such a Case & Estate, that you may so sin no more as formerly, or as others do, that is, labour to be converted, that lyes in two things.

1. To make that your great business to get a clear knowledge and through sense of the evil of sin.

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2. That you heartily close with Jesus Christ, that is the way to sin no more.

1. Get a clear knowledge and deep sense of your sin. Man is a rational creature and is always acting and moving for an end, and that which is his greatest encouragement in his motion toward such an end, is the apprehension of good, but draws the affections of man, either real good, or the appearance of it: and nothing will deter a man from the practice of evil, but the understanding it to be evil: the understanding is the guide of the will, the will hath the command of every other faculty, what the understanding represents as evil, the will avoids it, it hates it, and commands the whole man so to carry to it, and now the will of man will follow the ultimate sentence of the Judgement, when the sinner is fully convinced, and can represent the evil to be an evil indeed to the Judgement. Now when is that? The meer knowledge of good or evil, will not persuade to the embracing the one, or avoiding the other, to fallen man; it will (I say) be no persuasion, as it would to man in the state of innocency: Now there must be not only the knowledge of good and evil, but the experience of both: and by the same way that man was brought in love with sin, must he be brought out of love with it. How came man at first to be in love with sin, but by experience? The Devil tempted him, telling him that by eating the forbidden fruit he should know good and evil. And by the loss of good, he lost the inclination of his nature unto good, and thereby came to taste nothing but sweetness in the creature. Now there must not only be in the recovery of man, a discovery that sin is evil, but an experience of it that it is so. He must be cut off from evil by finding the evilness that is in sin, Jer. 2. 19. *Thou shalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing.* The speculative knowledge of the evil of it will not do, but you must know it to be so also: and indeed this is the last conclusion of the sanctified judgement that represents to the will that sin is a most bitter thing: Therefore saith Job, *The Lord hath made me to possess the sins of my youth, by writing bitter things against me.* He came to have an enjoyment of the fruits of his sin, those fruits of his own doing. Now what pleasure, what profit have you in things that God hath made bitter? You could not have believed it; but now God hath made you to believe it. Hence the Lord promises Covenant good to those that do reform their evil ways. Lev. 26. 44. *If their uncircumcised hearts be humbled &c.* When a man is brought not to sin, and to dislike sin, when his soul is humbled in the sense of the evil of sin. Therefore as you would not sin, O beg of the Lord, and make part of your daily prayer that God would give you an humbling sense of sin, that may be more evil to look over it, then ever it was pleasure to commit it. When the arrows, those poisoned arrows come to drink up a man's spirits, when he hath been in the fire of Gods anger, this will make him pray. Then labour to get an humbling sense of sin: whatever we talk of future judgements of God for sin, it seems nothing till we are thoroughly humbled, till God makes us feel what how grievous it is to have an hell in our Consciences: this will make sin terrible.

2. As you must feel the evil of sin, so you must heartily close with Jesus Christ. You will never be taken off from what you thought to be a good, untill you experience sin to be such an evil, and Christ the best good. When you come to obtain pardoning mercy from God, and sanctifying, your will is then carried out with a greater pleasure in the ways of Christ, then it took in the ways of sin. And this counsel Christ gives to the blind man cast out by the Jews, Joh. 9. 35.

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When he had found him, he said to him, dost thou believe on the Son of God? As if he should say, this is your great business: And if ever you would be engaged against sin, you must close heartily with Jesus Christ, this is the whole work of true Conversion: Now the Seed of God is sown in stead of the Seed of the Devil; and he is brought under another power, 1 Joh. 4. 3. it is said of such, the Commandments of God are not grievous. Those ways which were so burthensome, now he finds them pleasant ways. Hence it is said, 1 Joh. 3. 9. *he that is born of God cannot sin, because he is born of God*, neither fully, nor finally, not with the full consent of his will: It would be contrary to his renewed principle and sanctified Reason, that a man should chuse misery in stead of good; when he hath experienced both: such a one will say, (when every one shall leave Christ and turn to his lust) as Peter, *Lord, whether shall I goe*, Joh. 6. 68. that is the language of every believer, I have found by Experience the bitter ways of sin, and the sweet ways of believing and walking with God, therefore he can never utterly leave it, unless it were possible to lose his sanctifying grace, and be cut off from believing. This is the man that takes the counsel of Christ, to sin no more: The Lord hereby did represent himself to him as the Physician of his Soul, and minds him of a greater good then the meer healing of his body. Oh that this were the serious care of healed ones, not to sin against God by resting still in an unconverted Estate; endeavour fight and sense of sin as the worst evil; and Christ the best good, then and not till then you will avoid the one, and cleave to the other.

Direct. 2. Couch in this Counsel of Jesus Christ is, labour to keep up a deep and a through sense of the bitterness of that sin for which God hath been chastising of you. Though you may lose the sense of your affliction, never lose the sense of your sin: the dreadful and terrible thoughts you had of sin, when you were looking into Eternity. You should labour to remember those things when you are well, and delivered, that so your Soul may be kept in an humbled frame: thus the Church, Lam. 3. 19; 20. *Remembering mine affliction, and my misery, the wormwood, and the gall, my Soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.* This should be the care of every Christian, remembering the terrors of God; and the terrors of sin, how bitter God hath made it to you in your affliction, and this you should remember continually. And as we soon forget the sense of sin, so we soon lose the humbling sense of affliction, this is our misery; we should labour to keep up the sense of both upon our Souls to humble and encourage us. If so be your Souls were in the same Agony, if you could put them in the same Case as they were, when the Terrors of God were upon you, and you were within the sight of Eternity, you dare not commit those sins as you did before.

3. If you would sin no more, then take heed of the Temptations to sin, avoid all occasions of sinning. It is a meer pretence for a man to say, he doth what he can to avoid any evil while he runs into the Temptation to it, Jude Epist. v. 23. *Hating the very garments spotted with the flesh: would you not be defiled with sin, take heed of coming near the garment spotted with the flesh.* You cannot goe upon hot coals and not be scorched, nor touch pitch and not be defiled. Those sins that are greatest Temptations, you must especially take heed of them, avoiding the very appearance of evil, that you may be sure to avoid that which is really evil. Take heed of that which appears to be so, stand at the greatest distance from it. Our Lord Jesus taught us to make this our daily prayer, Math. 6. *Lead us not into Temptation*, we should be so much afraid of it. I grant, when ever God doth

lead us into Temptation, we have a greater encouragement to pray, that God would lead us out of it; But you should beware that you do not lead and tempt your selves thereinto: That you do not tempt the Devil. You have no encouragement to trust God to preserve you from the evil that you run into. The Lord will say, who bid you go: upon the Devils ground, when snares and Temptations watch for you, God never sent you. It is said of Jesus Christ, Math. 4. though he was without sin, and had no personal evil, yet when he went into the place of Temptation, he did not goe of himself, it is said, the Spirit led him into the Wilderness. Dost thou think thou canst withstand a Temptation better than Christ himself. Temptation is the Seed of the Devil, and our hearts are the natural ground: would you not think him a mad man that sows bryars and thorns in his ground: they will come up fast enough. So will you run to the Devil to fasten his Temptations. They that would avoid sin should stand at a great distance from every Temptation, avoiding those places and Companies that are too hard for them: stand at a great distance if ever you would be kept. Man in Innocency, though he had no sin, the Devil made way to enter in, that crooked, winding Serpent. It was going into the Temptation that lost mankind, therefore we should fly from it.

4. If you would not sin after Deliverance, then labour to get through knowledge, and make a full representation to your Souls of the evil effects and fruits of every sin. Do not look upon sin as it is in the Temptation, and comes in the appearance of good, but look what will be the Issue of it. This the Lord Jesus reminds him of: Remember worse things will befall you, Deut. 32. 29. *O that my people were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* It is a part of your greatest wisdom to consider what will be the end of your sinful practices. A rational man should act for an end, and all that means should be commended to him that suits his best end. It is a great Truth, the measures of good and evil are as they stand related to Eternity. As he said to Joab, 2 Sam. 24. *will it not be bitterness in the latter end:* so would I say to every Soul, Consider what will be afterward, that you should labour to possess your Souls with: that will discover the Hook that lyes under the bait. All these pleasures and vanities are but to catch your Souls, and bring you into everlasting misery.

5. If you would sin no more, That which is wrapt up in his heavenly Counsel, is, that you would seriously weigh the advantage you shall have by not sinning. If you would not see sorrow any more, you must not sin any more, 1 Pet. 3. 10. *He that loves life, and would see good dayes, let him refrain his Tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:* Would you see merry and prosperous dayes, then you must sin no more in heart, Tongue, or Conversation. It is true, that the most holy man in the world that walks most closely with God, cannot expect to be free from outward trouble and affliction, but they shall not be evils to him. He may dye in youth and strength, but he shall fill up his time, as much as he that lives one hundred years. That man that walks with God shall never see any evil dayes, for his very afflictions shall further his everlasting good. It is a Truth, that walking close with God, and free from sin, is the best way even to outward prosperity. Though there may be afflictions and sorrows to particular believers for the exercise of their grace, yet walking with God will give lasting peace and prosperity to them that so walk closely with him, when a people do so, and inward peace to Believers. Would you lose all your sweet enjoyments, would you

that God should bring a great deal more terrible dispensations upon you? then sin again, but if you would avoid these, it is by labouring to be in a way of Reformation.

6. If you would sin no more, be in the use of all means that God hath appointed to preserve you from sin, with earnest prayer, for his Spirit to help you to mortifie sin, and be found in the way of obedience, that you may be assisted by his Spirit in the doing of it. All means & endeavours that any man can use himself, without the help of Gods Spirit will not do, Rom. 8. 13. *mortifie the deeds of the body by the Spirit.* You may refrain a while, but you will never destroy one sin without the Spirit, and this Spirit is to be obtained by prayer, Luk. 11. 13. the Lord will give his Spirit to them that ask him: O be earnest with the Lord to lead you by the hand of his Spirit that shall guide and assist you in a holy course.

7. And Lastly, Resolve not in your own, but in Christs strength that you will not sin any more, Job. 34. 3 1. 32. I know resolutions and engagements in a mans own strength, they will fail him, Peter is a sad Instance, Luk. 22. He was as resolved as any could be, *though I dye with thee, I will never deny thee.* That is the Reason why they come to no better Effect, the Vows and Resolutions of men, because they think they can do it of themselves; Therefore (saith David) *I said I would take heed to my ways that I sin not with my Tongue,* Psal. 143. But he begs that God would keep the door of his lips, & establish his saying, I said, through the grace of God that I would do my duty, & be waiting upon God for his help, Psal. 119. 132. *I will run the wayes of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart. Teach me O Lord the way of thy Statutes and I will keep them unto the end.* Thus we should take up those holy resolutions in the grace and strength of Christ that we sin no more; But labour to walk more closely with God for time to come.

SER M. V.

THe last Doctrine we observed hence, was this, *That continuance in sin of-
fer eminent deliverances, pull down heavier Judgements;* or those that continue in sin after eminent healing mercyes from God, worse things will befall them. For the handling this Doctrinally, we shall shew you, 1. that there are worse things may befall men then ever yet have befallen them, 2. What are those sins, the continuance in which, or what is that continuance in sin, that worse Judgements shall befall such sinners. 3. That it shall be so, and the Reasons of it.

1. That worse things may befall sinners, then ever yet have befallen them, God hath sharper Arrows in his Quiver, other manner of Judgements to inflict on sinners then ever sinners have undergone; there is none should be so bold as to say, what ever afflictions they have come under, that God hath done his worst. I remember I have heard of one in England near Westchester, that had such expressions upon a great affliction; that God had now done his worst, but God made her a living monument of his severer Judgements, & that for many years. It is a great deal of boldness for any sinners to limit God in his Justice, as well as in his mercy, for any to say of God in his mercy, *can God provide for us?* it is a tempting God; so for any to say, Can God bring a greater Judgement? yea, there may be a great deal worse: Christ tels this man (you do not read what his sickness was, but you find by the Effects it was very distressing, he was unable to help himself, had never a friend to help him, and had lain under this infirmity thirty eight years, yet

the Lord Jesus tells him) if he doth not carry it better, worse things shall befall him; and the Lord tells us of the last times in which we live, Dan. 12. 1. There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a Nation; there are many Bless God will bring upon a professing people, such as never was worse on a Nation, so there are those God can bring upon a person such as never were worse on any person. But more particularly, 1. There are worse Judgements in this world, that God can inflict, then ever have been inflicted on any. 2. There are worse Judgements God hath to inflict in another world.

1. In this world, as 1. Temporal, or outward Judgements, such as respect the outward man, God can bring other manner of outward miseries then ever yet he hath done on any. 2. Spiritual Judgements, such as respect the inward man.

1. For outward Judgements, the Lord hath variety of them, a great variety, especially we read of four sore Judgements of God, Ezek. 14. 21. *For thus saith the Lord, how much more when I send my four sore Judgements on Jerusalem, the Sword, the Famine, the noysome Beasts, and the Pestilence; to cut off from it man and Beast.* God hath sent his Sword among you, but Famine is a sorer Judgement, and noysome Beasts that is a sorer Judgement still, and the Pestilence, but how much sorer are these, when all these are together; when what the Sword leaves the Famine shall devour, and what the Famine leaves, the wild Beasts shall devour, and what these leave, the Pestilence shall devour. When God sends all his Judgements at once upon a people, that is a sore affliction, as there are worse sorts of Judgements, so there is never an one of these sorts, but God can make it a worse Judgement in the degree it is, he can make every one of these Judgements a great deal worse, as you read, Jer. 9. 10. *As for me saith the Lord, my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: but will recompense their wayes on their heads.* When Judgements come in such a way of Judgement, without any mixture of Gods sparing and pitying mercy, there is a sorer Judgement: when the Errand of them is only to destroy, not to reprove, and purge a People, but to ruine them, and God will have no more mercy on them, this is a sore affliction.

2. There are spiritual judgements that God inflicteth in this world, and they are a great deal worse then any outward judgement; there are variety of spiritual judgements; but especially there are four main sorts of spiritual judgements, & the first, there is the sword, that is the word of God, when it is only for terror, only for conviction: a wound in the conscience is more dreadful then a wound in the body: when God sends an arrow into the conscience, a wounded man who can bear? Prov. 18. 14. it is an intollerable unsufferable wound, especially when God will provide no balm in Gilead, nor healing medicine for it, when God shall make a man a terror to himself, this is a sorer judgement. The Soul is the tenderer part, the more spiritual part, therefore every such judgement is the greater, that reacheth the Soul: and spiritual Famine, that is a more terrible judgement, when there shall be a famine, not of bread, not of that only, but of hearing the word of the Lord, Amos 8. 9, 10. That is a threatening of a sorer judgement, when you want bread for your souls, there shall be none to break it to you. And those spiritual wild beasts, those that will make a prey of mens souls; either those that will persecute for conscience sake, or as Christ saith of them, Math. 23. 13. Such as will not goe to heaven themselves, nor suffer any else to goe; when the bonds shall not be only on your bodies, but on your consciences; you shall be conscience bound, and there shall be snares laid for your consciences.

this is a sore Judgement, when you shall have such, that in stead of feeding the Flock, shall devour the Flock, Eccles. 34.4. when there shall be none but wolves that shall not spare the Flock of Christ, or make any profession to be so, this is a sore Judgement; as it is a far more desirable mercy then any outward enjoyment, for a people to see their Teachers, they are not driven into corners, Isai. 30.12. So it is a sorer Judgement then the want of any outward comfort, that in stead of those that lead you to Heaven, should as blind guides lead you to Hell, and both together fall into the pit. And those Temptations of the Devil, when God lets loose Satan with violent oppressing Temptations, and God will give up men to be oppressed by the violent and subtle Temptations of the Devil: and then this spiritual plague is the worst of all plagues, that Pestilence of a hard seared Conscience, that plague of the heart, when God shall inflict it as a Judgement, when God shall give up men to their hardness, yea, into the hand of their own lusts, Psal. 81.11,12. *So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts*, into the hands of their hearts lusts. This is the sorest Judgement that God can inflict on a people in this world, when it is in the highest degree of it, a man to be delivered up to his own hearts lusts, when the Lord saith to a people, ye will not be saved, and ye shall not be saved, ye will not be reformed, and ye shall not, ye will not be made clean, therefore ye shall be filthy still. That very sin of living in sin after deliverance, is a greater Judgement then the affliction out of which ye were delivered: when God inflicteth spiritual Judgements in the highest degree, as there are higher degrees of spiritual Judgements, when temporal and spiritual shall be together, that is a great deal worse, when God shall follow you with all his sore judgements, both these afflictive to the body and the Soul, when there shall be a Famine to the body and the Soul, the Sword of the Enemy, and the Sword of God, an outward plague, & a spiritual plague, these are worse & greater judgements.

2. God hath worse to inflict in another world, if you should escape in this: if a sinner should goe scot-free here, every day would aggravate his everlasting punishment. What will a sinner be a gainer in the issue, when his main work in sinning and going on in sin after deliverance, is but heaping up the measure of his wrath, Rom. 2.4. *Thou treasurest up wrath against the day of wrath, and the Revelation of the righteous Judgement of God*, Hell punishment is greater then any that can be inflicted in this world, Math. 13.28. *Fear him that can cast Soul and body into Hell*, that is mo't to be feared as being the mo't terrible judgement; and there are degrees of punishment in hell, there is a hell that is seven times hotter, they that continue in sin after judgement and mercy after deliverance, they will have a greater degree of Torment, Heb. 10.29. *How much sorer Judgement shall they be counted worthy of*, there are some are worthy of greater judgement then others are, and God hath greater: there is the Heathens Hell, there is the hell of them that live under the Gospel, there is the hypocrites hell where the fire will be more intense, there will be a thicker darkness, more exquisite Torment, that God will inflict upon one, then upon another, that is the first thing, that there are worse judgements may befall you, worse in this world, and in that that is to come.

2. what is that continuance in sin for which God will inflict worse judgements, that continuance in sin after deliverance & mercies? *Ans.* 1. it is a continuance in a state of unregeneracy, a being without a saving close with Christ, the end of Gods mercies and deliverances is to give space for repentance, to give another time, to try a sinner whether he will use longer time better, in making provision for Eternity

Rom,

1. the riches of Gods goodness that leadeth to Repentance, 2 Pet. 3. 15. the end of Gods long suffering is your Salvation, that is Gods end, his gracious end, that that he doth approve, if that be not a sinners end, and his work that he may be saved, this is a continuance in sin, that will bring greater judgements, Rev. 2. 22. I gave her space to repent, and she did not repent, therefore God threatens he would throw her on a bed of sickness. It may be many of you were afraid when you were near to death, that that was your great fear of dying, was, of being prepared to dye: what Vows, and what promises were made then? if you might have another day of grace, now God tries you, if that be not so improved, that that is given for your trial, when it is improved contrary to Gods end, will all down worse and greater judgements on a sinner: this is that will leave you without excuse, when another judgement overtakes you, when God will say, he will take your word no more, when he hath tried you, and found you false to your Promise of improving time better.

2. Continuance in sin, in those particular evils, God hath been convincing you, as provocations to himself, some evil course and way of life, some particular evils that God hath burthened Conscience with in time of sickness, or under the word of God, sins that you have Confessed, that you have in some degree bewailed before God, and promised amendment, the continuance in those sins is a provocation to greater judgements, as is said of those, Jer. 42. 21, 22. I have this day declared to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, for any thing for which you sent me to enquire of God: they promised and made solemn Vows, they would obey, yet did but dissemble with God; now therefore know certainly, that you shall dye by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence, in the place whether you desire to go: you will dissemble with God, but God will not be mocked, if you will not be as good as your promise, and your word to God, God will certainly be as good as his Threatning to you, Jer. 44. 25, 26. when Jeremiah had told them from the Lord, what was the sin had provoked the Lord against them, therefore if now they would carry it better, God would have compassion on them, but they were resolved on their way, and would have their lusts; We will surely perform our Vows, we have vowed to pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, therefore hear the word of the Lord, behold I have sworn by my great Name that my Name shall be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah. So what ever is the sin you have made solemn Vows to God in the time of your distress against, if it have been your Sabbath breaking, contempt of the Word and Ordinances of God, Covetousness, pride, Sensuality, Contention, if these be not reformed, if you will live in them still, and have your own way, what ever God saith to the contrary, this is to live in those sins that will pull down greater judgements.

3. That greater Judgements will befall such, for God hath threatned it, Lev. 24. 24, 28. If that doth not doe, saith God, I will punish you seven times more for your abominations: when one is over, God tries what that will doe, and if that doe not doe, and God on trial sees that you are never the better, then you must expect seven times greater judgements. And we find that this hath been the way of Gods proceeding, both with profane sinners, and his professing people, that he hath followed them with worse judgements, when they have not been amended with lesser: so God did with Pharaoh, God hath variety of plagues, when he delivered him from one, and yet he continued hardened against the

Lord

Lord; then he brought another and worse plague, till he himself at last was destroyed and his people. So it was with a professing people, *Psal. 78* throughout that Psalm: God delivered them many times, and they provoked him, and provoked him so far, till he gave up his glory into the hand of the enemy. There were degrees of punishment, and every punishment was worse then before: then God abhorred his people, and gave up his strength into the hand of the enemy. *v. 50.*

The Reasons of it.

Reas. 1. From the Justice of God, who gives every man according to their works, *Rom. 2.6.* He will render every man according to their deeds. Where deeds have been worse, the Judgements of God will be worse, *Tribulation and anguish, to the few first, and then to the Gentile*: a Jews punishment shall be greater and worse then that of the Gentile, because God will render to every one according to his works: Judgements are the wages of sin, *Rom. 6. 23.* Now God will give wages according to every mans works, they that have been more in the work of sin, shall receive greater wages of sin; now sinning after eminent mercy is a greater sin, therefore deserveth greater punishment: for,

1. It is a sin against a great deal more mercy; there is Gods sparing mercy, and the riches of Gods goodness, as the Apostle calls it, *Rom. 2. 4.* Despise thou the riches of his goodness? there is a great deal of riches of mercy in every mercy a sinner enjoyeth: when God hath a sinner at such an advantage to destroy him, it is rich mercy now to spare him: the going on in sin, is contempt cast upon the riches of Gods mercy, that which Justice will not bear, but is sure to revenge.

2. It is against more light, after more of the knowledge of their Masters will, now he that knows his Masters will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, *Luke 12. 47.*

3. They are sins against vows and engagements to obedience, to sin after deliverance: the praying for deliverance layes the Sinner under a Vow of obedience and duty to God; besides the voluntary vows that many have made in their distress, unto God: now that is a great sin, to sin against our voluntary engagements we have made to God, when we have said we will no more transgress: see how God puts Jacob in mind of it, how angry God was with Jacob when he did not perform his Vow, *Gen. 35. 1.* Go to Bethel where thou vowedst to serve the Lord. The greatest affliction that ever he had in his Family, was on the neglect of his vow, that great miscarriage of his daughter Dinah, and of his Sons, was a punishment of the neglect of his vow. God doth not delight in fools, *Eccles. 5. 4.* that when they say they will take care of their duty, doe not perform it: when they are rash with their mouths, it is a provocation to God to destroy the work of his hands.

Reas. 2. From the faithfulness of God: worse things must needs befall such, because he will as certainly perform what he hath threatned, as what he hath promised. God will be as good as his word, and he hath threatned every Sinner that continues in sin after warning, after mercies, that greater judgements shall befall them.

Reas. 3. From the wisdom of God, the manifestation of Gods wisdom, a great deal of Gods wisdom will be manifested, as in variety and excellent ways of delivering his People, so in special judgements on evil doers, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* God knows how to deliver the godly, and to reserve the wicked to the day of Judgement to be punished. It is a part of the wisdom of God in governing the world, that he knows

how

How to give out punishments to evil doers, that he knows how to reward all the obedience of his Servants, though he seems to forget them for a time, and knows how to punish Sinners, though he seems to wink at them for a time.

By way of improvement,

The only Use we shall make of this is, to be a word of Conviction & awakening to us: we have been under the judgements of God, and God hath eminently delivered us, He hath delivered from the sword of a barbarous enemy, and hath in a great measure delivered from that more immediate judgement the *Small-Pox* that came with such commission from God to destroy; now you are delivered, you must not look on your selves out of the reach of Gods Judgements, doe not think God hath done his worst, and will doe no more, or put your selves in a fools Paradoxe, to say as Agag, *1 Sam. 15. 26.* He put himself in his brave cloaths and said, *The bitterness of death is over*: so many think the bitterness of death and hell is over now they have escaped the present Judgement: but he found it otherwise to his cost. And you that continue in your sins have reason to be afraid that greater Judgement is nearer then you are aware of. *1 Thes. 5. 3.* *When they say peace and safety, when an ungodly man saith so that lives in his sin, all shall be well with me, and sudden destruction cometh.*

I would only lay before you these two or three Considerations.

1. Consider that outward Providences are no argument of Gods love, whether they be afflictive or mercifull: meely outward Providences are no argument of Gods special love, *Eccles. 9. 1.* *You cannot see love or hatred by any of these things that are before you.* You cannot say God hath more love to you, then he doth to them he took away by the disease, because he spared you; for these in themselves are but common mercies.

2. Consider that meely when outward judgement ceaseth, we cannot thence conclude Gods anger ceaseth, or is turned away: We cannot conclude by the present removal of a judgement, that the anger of God is removed; for God may remove it in anger. There are pardoning mercies, God may be said to pardon, when he doth only spare for a time. *Psal. 78. 36.* *So he forgave their iniquity*: How forgive? Not with a special saving pardoning mercy; for he punished them afterwards, yea unto destruction, many of them; but it was a present reprieve from the judgement. God may be as angry with you still as ever, though he hath removed the present Judgement: a sparing mercy may be in wrath, in displeasure to the person that is spared; therefore you have no reason to be secure, nor to be pleased with your present condition, while God may be angry with you, while the anger of God is not appeased: you have no reason to cry peace to your selves when God doth not speak a word of peace.

3. Consider, that when men are delivered from affliction, and not saved from their sins, it is certain God is angry with them still: when they are delivered from an outward affliction, and sin remains, that that is the cause and coar of affliction and evil will be not removed, you may certainly conclude it is but a reservation to greater judgements. As it is an argument of their happy condition that they are in the very midst of affliction, when they are taught of God in it, made more holy, humble & conformable to Gods will: so it is an argument of a miserable and a cursed estate, though you are out of affliction, if you have not been taught of God: if you are out of affliction, but still in sin, it is a certain argument of reservation to greater punishment, that worse things will befall you, unless

timely Repentance prevent it. There are these two ends why God doth punish his people, and God will accomplish his end in every punishment: there is his work, and his whole work God will doe on mount Sion, *Isa. 10. 22.* When God hath done his whole work, then he burneth the rod, and not till then, it is but laid by, and Gods intention to bring a greater. What is Gods whole work? There is in every Judgement, a work of judgement, and a work of mercy; there is a work of mercy God hath to all his elect and people, to reform and refine them to purge away their sin, to make them holy, and to make them better. *Isa. 27. 9.* That is the work to them that are the true children of Sion. But then God hath a work of judgement, that is on those he never intends saving mercy to: every judgement is but the beginning of their misery: God judgeth them in way of satisfaction to Justice; there is but part of payment in one judgement that is upon them, and it is to ensure them that the remainder is behind, that God will be sure to take the full payment. If none of this work be done, if God hath not refined his people, there is still some work to be done; & if there be those that are unconverted, never to be converted, greater and worse judgements doe abide; none such, but shall have greater cause to curse the day of their birth, then ever Job or Jeremiah, yea, to curse the day of their preservation: better you had died of that sickness, because your judgement is but so much increased by your living. Those that shall live out their dayes without true repentance of their sin, every dayes mercy is but an aggravation of their condemnation. There are many signs of Gods remaining displeasure; methinks the clouds doe seem to return after the rain, God doth not make it cleer day with us, nor cause the clouds to becalm and scatter, but to gather again: There are many Signs, as Gods taking away those that are the prime, and hopefull ones of the next generation, that is a sign of worse judgements. *1 King. 14. 13.* It was sad to Jeroboams house, and to all Israel, the taking away Jeroboams Son, in whom some good thing toward the Lord was found: it was a judgement to the whole house of Israel; he was taken from the evil, and it was a sign from the Lord of the evil he would bring on them: so the taking away so many of Gods faithfull ones, especially in eminent place, in Magistracy and in Ministry, putting out so many lights in the Candlesticks, and that men, many of them, in their prime, in the flower of their years, that were very likely to have lived many years, and done much service to God; that died not in a full old age, and full of days, but in their youth, and in the flower of their dayes; and, which is a great deal worse, and makes it look the sadder, that there are not any doe rise, and fill their places: that it is so hard a thing to see, and rationally to think, that there are men to fill up the rooms of those God hath taken from us: When stars doe set, and there are no other that rise, it is a sign of a very dark night: when men that stood in the gap are taken away, and none to put in their room, they are sad signs that God hath mind to take away the hedge, unless speedy repentance and reformation prevent this ruine. Yet this is the saddest sign of all, that these things doe befall us, as so few doe lay them to heart, that men are not awakened, to besitt themselves to lay hold on God, that when they have lost all visible props, they doe not make sure of God to be their friend; While God himself stands at a distance, and pos sinners stand at a distance from God: this is the saddest sign of all, that men are not humbled, doe not stir up themselves to lay hold on God, *Isa. 57. 1.* The Righteous are taken away, & no man laying it to heart, that was the sad doom of the

people: had there been broken hearts under a breach, that might have made some
 friends, and have been a means to prevail with God to pour out his Spirit: but
 to be an unhumiliated, unreformed people under such dispensations of God, this is
 one of the saddest signs, though I do verily believe, and have many Arguments to
 shew my thoughts concerning it, that God will not throw up the work he hath
 done in New-England, will not utterly root up the plant he hath planted, and that
 the Judgement God hath taken out of the hand of an Enemy, he may not easily
 put it into the hand of another, but that he will take it himself, and deal with his
 People by his own hand: but yet believe it, if God love you, if you are such that
 God hath special favour for, then God will not spoyle you, and if God will not
 spoyle you then he will not spare his Rod, and you may be sure, if one will not do
 another shall. The godly & holy shall be refined, if one Furnace will not do
 another shall. Those that are Elect, however they are like wild Asses Colts,
 God will have his Month to find you, God hath other Thorns to set in the way of
 your lovers, if you will be like Manasseh, that must be taken in the bushes, God
 will have his time to do it, when you shall humble your selves and your Souls be-
 fore the God of your Fathers; them that God hath designed for Conversion, they
 shall be converted, what ever way God hath to do it, it seems to be a terrible way:
 but if there be some God hath no such special love for, let me tell you, God will
 not spare you to spoyle his end, God is about reforming work, not only his Peo-
 ple, but things among his people, God is about to have other manner of Churches,
 and other manner of Spirits, his People shall be refined, but they shall be consu-
 med, it will be a terrible day of the Lord; but shall be as refiners fire, and will
 purifie the gold, but the dross shall be consumed in the fire.

And therefore let me leave this solemn advice with you, nay, it is not mine but
 Christs, and that the Lord himself gives you; that you bewail your former, and
 take heed of future sinning, Eccl. 12. 1, 2. *Remember your Creator in the days of your*
youth, the Clouds may not return after the Rain. It is spoken to those that are
 not only in the beginning of their time, but in their prosperous time. If you so
 do, you will not only prevent future judgements, but be in the way to better retri-
 butes, as well as continue those you have; I may say to you from the Lord, you
 have seen the worst dayes, the bitterness of death is over, the best are behind;
 and your present preservation is a pledge of your future Salvation, *Psal. 94. 12.*
Psal. 119. 71, 75. which will put an end to sin & sorrow, and the fear of either for
 ever. And may say with him, *Isai. 38. 17.* *In love to my Soul the Lord hath deliver-*
ed me, for he hath cast all my sins behind his back, and with the Apostle, *2 Cor. 1. 9. 10.*

FINIS.

In the Epistle, 1. 4. for verse review. P. 4. J. 20. 5. Luk. 10.

timely Repentance prevent it. There are these two ends why God doth punish his people, and God will accomplish his end in every punishment: there is his work, and his whole work God will doe on mount Zion, *Iſa. 10. 22.* When God hath done his whole work, then he burneth the rod, and not till then, it is but laid by, and Gods intention to bring a greater. What is Gods whole work? There is in every Judgement, a work of judgement, and a work of mercy; there is a work of mercy God hath to all his elect and people, to reform and refine them to purge away their sin, to make them holy, and to make them better, *Iſa. 27. 9.* That is the work to them that are the true children of Zion. But then God hath a work of judgement, that is on those he never intends saving mercy to: every judgement is but the beginning of their misery: God judgeth them in way of satisfaction to Justice; there is but part of payment in one judgement that is upon them, and it is to enſure them that the remainder is behind, that God will be ſure to take the full payment. If none of this work be done, if God hath not refined his people, there is still some work to be done; & if there be those that are unconverted, never to be converted, greater and worse judgements doe abide; none such, but shall have greater cause to curse the day of their birth, then ever Job or Jeremiah, yea, to curse the day of their preservation: better you had died of that sickness, because your judgement is but so much increased by your living. Those that shall live out their dayes without true repentance of their sin, even dayes mercy is but an aggravation of their condemnation. There are many signs of Gods remaining displeasure; methinks the clouds doe seem to return after the rain, God doth not make it cleer day with us, nor cause the clouds to break and scatter, but to gather again: There are many Signs, as Gods taking away those that are the prime, and hopefull ones of the next generation, that is a sign of worse judgements. *1 King. 14. 13.* It was sad to Jeroboams house, and to all Israel, the taking away Jeroboams Son, in whom some good thing toward the Lord was found: it was a judgement to the whole house of Israel; he was taken from the evil, and it was a sign from the Lord of the evil he would bring on them: so the taking away so many of Gods faithfull ones, especially in eminent place, in Magistracy and in Ministry, putting out so many lights in the candlesticks, and that men, many of them, in their prime, in the flower of their years, that were very likely to have lived many years, and done much service to God; that died not in a full old age, and full of days, but in their youth, and in the flower of their dayes; and, which is a great deal worse, and makes it look the sadder, that there are not any doe rise, and fill their places: that it is so hard thing to see, and rationally to think, that there are men to fill up the rooms those God hath taken from us: When stars doe set, and there are no other that rise, it is a sign of a very dark night: when men that stood in the gap are taken away, and none to put in their room, they are sad signs that God hath mind to take away the hedge, unless speedy repentance and reformation prevent this ruine. Yet this is the saddest sign of all, that these things doe befall us, as so few doe lay them to heart, that men are not awakened, to besitt themselves to lay hold on God, that when they have lost all visible props, they doe not make sure of God to be their friend; While God himself stands at a distance, and pagans stand at a distance from God: this is the saddest sign of all, that men are not humbled, doe not stir up themselves to lay hold on God, *Iſa. 57. 1.* The Religions are taken away, & no man laying it to heart, that was the sad doom of the

people, had there been broken hearts under a breach, that might have made some
 ends, and have been a means to prevail with God to pour out his Spirit : but
 an unhumbl'd, unreformed people under such dispensations of God, this is
 of the saddest signs, though I do verily believe, and have many Arguments to
 my thoughts concerning it, that God will not throw up the work he hath
 in New-England, will not utterly root up the plant he hath planted, and that
 the Judgement God hath taken out of the hand of an Enemy, he may not easily
 put it into the hand of another, but that he will take it himself, and deal with his
 people by his own hand : but yet believe it, if God love you, if you are such that
 God hath special favour for, then God will not spoyle you, and if God will not do
 spoyle you then he will not spare his Rod, and you may be sure, if one will not do
 another shall. The godly & holy shall be refined, if one Furnace will not do
 another shall. Those that are Elect, however they are like wild Asses Colts,
 God will have his Month to find you, God hath other Thorns to set in the way of
 your lovers, if you will be like Manasseh, that must be taken in the bushes, God
 will have his time to do it, when you shall humble your selves and your Souls be-
 fore the God of your Fathers ; them that God hath designed for Conversion, they
 shall be converted, what ever way God hath to do it, it seems to be a terrible way.
 if there be some God hath no such special love for, let me tell you, God will
 not spare you to spoyle his end, God is about reforming work, not only his Peo-
 ple, but things among his people, God is about to have other manner of Churches,
 and other manner of Spirits, his People shall be refined, but they shall be consu-
 med, it will be a terrible day of the Lord ; but shall be as refiners fire, and will
 purifie the gold, but the dross shall be consumed in the fire.

And therefore let me leave this solemn advice with you, nay, it is not mine but
 Christs, and that the Lord himself gives you ; that you bewail your former, and
 the seed of future sinning, Eccl. 12. 1, 2. *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your
 youth,* the Clouds may not return after the Rain. It is spoken to those that are
 not only in the beginning of their time, but in their prosperous time. If you so
 do, you will not only prevent future judgements, but be in the way to better re-
 gies, as well as continue those you have ; I may say to you from the Lord, you
 have seen the worst dayes, the bitterness of death is over, the best are behind ;
 and your present preservation is a pledge of your future Salvation, *Psal. 94. 12.*
Thou wilt slay him, and destroy him, thou wilt put him to silence, and thou wilt say,
He is dead, he is gone, he is departed, he is no more. which will put an end to sin & sorrow, and the fear of either for
 ever. And may say with him, *Isai. 38. 17.* *In love to my Soul the Lord hath deliver-*
ed me, for he hath cast all my sins behind his back, and with the Apostle, *2 Cor. 1. 9. 10.*

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